



STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

Internal Communique ■ State Schools for Severely Handicapped

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State Schools for
Severely Handicapped
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Curriculum Changes in 2004-2005

by Merv Blunt, Central Office

State Schools for Severely Handicapped (SSSH) is introducing a new curriculum in the 2004-2005 school year. Presently, it is in draft form, so staff need only familiarize themselves with the curriculum. During the 2005-2006 school year, SSSH staff will be required to implement the curriculum.

The SSSH curriculum was developed over the past two years by various committees of SSSH staff including teachers, therapists, building administrators and supervisors for instruction. This curriculum is not in the format typically found in a public school district. Because many SSSH students have very diverse skills and abilities, our curriculum is set up in grade spans rather than individual grades. This allows SSSH to continue to meet the educational needs of all the students, no matter their grade levels or abilities. As an example, an SSSH student who is at the 7th-grade level does not require all the IEP goals to be taken from the 6-8 grade span. The goals may also be taken from the K-5 and 9-12 grade spans if appropriate. The purpose of the curriculum is not to dictate what to teach or when, but to provide a focused way for teachers to develop IEP goals.

The curriculum is in the process of being reviewed by a 10-member oversight committee. The committee consists of nonstate school employees, such as university professors, curriculum specialists, speech therapists and parents. All members of the oversight committee have experience with students with severe and profound disabilities. The committee was asked to respond to a survey of nine statements and three

questions about SSSH curriculum. So far, we have received five of the 10 surveys back, or 50 percent. We are in the process of compiling responses to the three questions. As for the nine statements, 80 percent of the five respondents have either "strongly agreed" or "agreed" with all the statements in the survey.

The SSSH curriculum is based on the Missouri Standards and on the curriculum model developed by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). The components are:

- Missouri Standards,
- Alternate Frameworks,
- graduate goals,
- knowledge standards,
- process standards,
- learning activities, and
- assessment.

The curriculum is based on the Show-Me Standards of Missouri just like all the public school curriculums in Missouri. Several years ago, SSSH developed the Alternate Frameworks for SSSH students, which is our interpretation of the Show-Me Standards. The graduate goals are what the district, in this case SSSH, expects its graduates to accomplish by graduation.

The SSSH curriculum is divided into the same six content (subject areas) areas that all Missouri school districts have: communication arts, math, social studies, fine arts, PE/health and science. Within these areas are the knowledge or essential skills ("what all students should know") for each content area that the curriculum committees have decided

(continued on page 8)

The REACH Program

by Merv Blunt, Central Office

The 2004-2005 school year is the pilot year for our new REACH program. REACH is based on the vision SSSH has for all students:

- Respect
- Effective Practices
- Achievement
- Creativity
- High Expectations

Each building administrator will designate one classroom as the REACH classroom. This classroom will be the model classroom for the school and will develop IEPs based on the new curriculum and implement educational strategies to improve student outcomes.

For REACH to be successful, several support systems will be provided during the school year for the REACH teacher.

First, three times a year, the building administrator, supervisor for instruction and the REACH teacher will attend periodic trainings specifically designed to assist them in developing a REACH classroom; using leaderships skills; IEPs; and improving student outcomes.

After each training, the REACH teacher will return to the classroom and implement what has been learned. To continue the support of the REACH teacher, the building administrator

and the supervisor for instruction will provide a total of 10 hours of support to the REACH teacher each month.

The other classroom teachers will participate in professional development activities based on the same training, which the building administrator will provide. If any teacher other than the designated REACH teacher wants to implement all or part of the training, this is permissible, but at this time it is not required.

REACH is an exciting program that provides staff not only with a conceptual background on the development of the program but also provides to the REACH teacher practical application strategies and techniques that can be used to improve student learning and educational outcomes. ♦

Preparing for the MSIP Review

by Merv Blunt, Central Office

During the spring of the 2005-2006 school year, SSSH will participate in the MSIP review process for accreditation in the state of Missouri. In 2006, all three state board-operated programs, SSSH, Missouri School for the Deaf and Missouri School for the Blind, will participate in an MSIP review for the first time. All other Missouri school districts have been participating in MSIP reviews for the past 14 years.

As we prepare for our first review, it is necessary for everyone to have a fundamental understanding of how and why the process was developed and what is expected during a review. MSIP stands for the Missouri School Improvement Plan, which is based on Missouri's Outstanding Education Act of 1990. The MSIP review is the process the Missouri School Improvement Section of DESE uses to evaluate school districts to see if they are implementing specific state Standards and Indicators that focus on school improvement and achievement on a statewide basis. The MSIP Standards and Indicators will guide school districts through the review process, which allows the MSIP review

team to evaluate the school district and classify the district by levels of accreditation.

MSIP is set up in cycles, and each cycle lasts five years. During a cycle, every Missouri school district participates in an MSIP review. MSIP looks at specific criteria and curriculum development.

SSSH and the other two state board-operated programs have been placed in the current third cycle. While other school districts in the third cycle have already had two reviews and are now in their third review, this is our first time. This means we have had to play catch-up to get everything ready for the third-cycle review without the benefit of previous reviews or 15 years to develop our curriculum.

We have been working diligently for the past three to four years to get ready for the review. The Central Office has completed a self-study in preparation for the review and has stayed in contact with members of the Division of School Improvement at DESE to discuss criteria that is either unique to or not part of the SSSH education process. Our staff has

also been very involved in developing a curriculum specifically designed for SSSH students.

From the MSIP review, the level of accreditation to be given a district is decided, ranging from accredited or provisional accredited to unaccredited. During the 2004-2005 school year, all the SSSH locations will participate in a mock review to prepare for the actual review next year.

The team leaders for the MSIP review have been selected, and they will be contacting staff in the future about: the different components of the review; how to address some of the issues in the review; the best way to gather the necessary data required for the review; and setting up simulated staff interviews.

During the current school year, the Central Office will conduct a mock MSIP review. Our staff will be gathering the information needed, writing reports and conducting mock interviews. As the school year progresses, you will receive more information about the MSIP review as well as specific information how to prepare for the review through newsletters, professional development activities and staff meetings. Looking at what has been accomplished in the past three to four years related to MSIP, we are well on our way to a successful MSIP review. ♦

Musical Instruments in the Classroom

The classroom has a diverse level of student abilities, both cognitively and physically. In reviewing the most common skills for the students in the classroom, a teacher found the need to teach the following to his students:

- Grasping
- Holding on to an item
- Attending
- Switch activation
- Solitary leisure skills
- Choice-making skills

The 9th-grade teacher chose not to use preschool items in his classroom and decided to find materials geared to teenagers and their interests. The teacher found inexpensive, battery-operated electrical musical instruments. Each instrument has various tempos and rhythms programmed into them, and some have programmed music in them. The music is geared to teenagers. The teacher uses the instruments somewhat like karaoke with the students accompanying their favorite music selections from the radio, whether it is country, R&B or pop. Each instrument is activated by either a button or a switch. The drums use drumsticks that give a full effect even with a light touch. The enthusiasm and interest of the students has dramatically changed since they can participate.

This teacher used Kawasaki products manufactured by DSI Toys, Inc., of Houston, Texas. It is possible to locate the following products from various Internet vendors, and the cost ranges from \$24 to \$50 per item.

- Kawasaki Key Boom Bass Guitar
- Kawasaki Big Bam Boom (Latino style drum)
- Kawasaki Keyboard

It is also possible to purchase electronic keyboards, guitars and drums made by different manufacturers. ♦

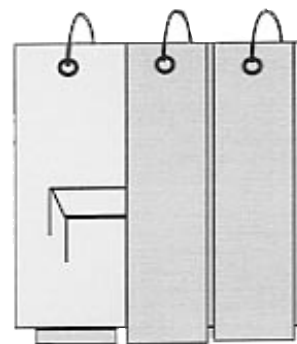
Visually Cued Instruction

Visual Puzzle

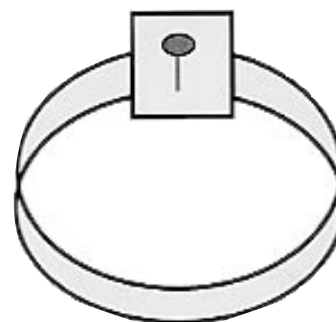
This is a small flipchart made of tag board. On the back is a picture of the reinforcing activity. As the student completes an activity, a piece is flipped back to reveal a part of the picture. When the entire picture is revealed, the student earns the activity.

Other functions:

1. A piece can be flipped at five-minute intervals to remind the student of the reinforcing activity at the end of the task.
2. The entire picture of the task is shown, and a piece is flipped forward to signal the end of the task. For example, five minutes left, three minutes left, then one minute left.
3. The back can show the work task, and as the pieces are flipped forward, it shows the reinforcing activity.



Visual Puzzle



Wristband Reinforcer

Wristband Reinforcer

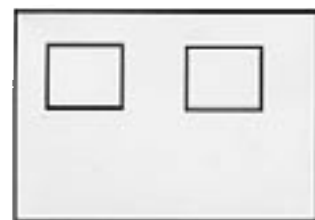
This is an activity bracelet that indicates the activity the student will earn. It serves as a reminder of the reinforcer. The picture is affixed with Velcro. It can be used when the student requires a constant reminder of the reinforcer, such as during swimming, off-campus instruction or walking.

Cause-and-Effect Board

This shows the student that a reinforcing activity will be earned if a task is completed.

Other functions:

1. Teaching a student how to use a visual schedule.
2. Teaching students to associate pictures to objects. ♦



Cause-and-Effect Board

INSTRUCTION

Creating a Social Story

by Carol Martin

Supervisor for Instruction

So, what is a social story? A social story is a story designed to tell the student exactly what to do or expect in all types of situations. They are written **in the first person from the student's point of view**. During those difficult times in the instructional day, just hearing or being allowed to read a story can help a student be successful. You may need to write a social story if a student is having difficulty with the following:

- Transitions – activity to activity or environment to environment
- Ending an activity
- Using appropriate behaviors in social situations
- Adapting to a change in routine
- Special events
- Understanding abstract concepts such as waiting

To create a social story for students with severe disabilities, digital pictures are a great way to make the message concrete.

When taking digital pictures for a social story, start by mapping out the story. This will help you determine the pictures you will need to take. For instance, if a student is having difficulty going from the classroom to the bus, you might want to take pictures of what they should encounter on the way to the bus. The text for the pictures will tell the student what their behavior should be. For example, "I will get up from my desk when the teacher tells me it is time to get on the bus."

Easy steps to creating a Social Story in Microsoft Word®

1. Take pictures with a digital camera

Open the pictures on your computer with whatever photo management software you have. Save each picture as a .jpg file. Click on File, Save As, and by File Name enter the name of each picture and add

“.jpg” if not already displayed. Then click on Save (file name example: BJ getting on bus.jpg). Open and save every picture you will use in the photo management program.

2. Open Microsoft Word®

Type the Title on the first page. Select the font and size that is suited for that student. To move to the next page, hold down Ctrl and Enter on the keyboard to insert a page break.

3. Place a text box on the second page

Add a text box that will hold the first picture. If the drawing toolbar is not showing at the bottom of the computer screen, click on View, Toolbars, Drawing. On this toolbar, click on the text box icon (white square with writing). Place your cursor where you want the text box to appear on the page, and hold down the left mouse button and drag out the text box to form the size you want for the picture. Release the mouse. To move the text box: Click anywhere on the border of the box and drag the box to the desired location. To resize the text box: Click on the border to show the small white boxes and place the cursor on the box on the side you wish to change (cursor will change to an arrow) and then move the border in or out to reduce or enlarge the box.

4. Insert picture in text box

Place the cursor in the text box. On the menu bar at the top of the screen, click on Insert, Picture, From File. A window will come up on the screen. Scroll down the "Look In" section and locate the place where you saved your pictures – hard drive (C) or photo manager program. Click on the folder containing the first picture, and click Insert. This places the picture in the text box.

5. Revise the picture

a. To modify the picture – click on the picture, and the Picture Toolbar will appear on the screen.

b. Cropping – If you wish to remove part of the picture, click on the tool that looks like two plusses stacked one above the other (+). Now move the cursor to the small square at each corner (and midway point) on the border of the picture, and pull in the

edge until the picture looks the way you want.

c. Format picture – The button on the Picture Toolbar that looks like a paint can is the formatting button. Click on this button, and a window will appear on the screen. In this screen at the top are file tabs. Select the tab Size, and set the width and height for the picture you need, and then click on the button labeled OK. This will allow you to have the same size pictures on each page. (Or, you can simply drag the picture larger in the text box.) Select the tab Picture and move the Brightness and Contrast slides to alter the appearance of the picture if it is dull or dark.

d. Resize the text box – If your picture is cut off, you can resize your text box as mentioned above.

6. Add a text box for the words.

Following the directions in step 4, add a second text box on the page underneath the picture. Move the cursor inside the text box, and type the sentence(s) in the first person. Enlarge the text as needed for the student. The box will have a line around it. To remove the line, click on the down arrow to the right of the paintbrush on the Drawing toolbar. Select No line. To move to the next page, move the cursor out of the text boxes to the side of the picture box, and hit Tab on the keyboard. Then hold down Ctrl and Enter. This takes you to the third page.

7. Insert remaining pictures and text

Follow the above steps to add the remaining pictures and text.

8. Assemble the book

Print the pages (File, Print or click on the printer icon on the top toolbar), and put them in order. Either put each page in page protectors or laminate and three-hole punch, then place the pages in a binder to make the book.

When you create a social story and read it to the student a few times each day, the student suddenly is able to demonstrate the behavior for which the social story was written. I have used social stories many times over the years, and I have yet to use one that didn't work. Social stories really do work like magic! ♦

Today

*May today there be peace
within as I go about my job
as a Teacher.*

*May I trust that I am exactly
where I am meant to be.*

*May I not forget the infinite
possibilities that can occur
today because I cared enough
to be a Teacher and not just
a caregiver.*

*May I use my teaching skills
to pass on to my students the
knowledge and skills needed
to lighten their load and
enhance their quality of life.*

*May I be content knowing
I did my best today and
my students benefited from
having me as their Teacher.*

*May I strive today to be the
best Teacher I can be.*

*May I take pride in knowing
my students will graduate
with skills that I taught
them.*

*May I do my job so well that
when I am gone, I will be
missed.*

*May my life and the lives
of all my students be better
because I was a Teacher
today.*

— Pat Scheidt
Supervisor for Instruction

TECHNOLOGY

SSSH on the Web

by Beth Hale, Central Office

The SSSH Web site has a new look. The revamped site includes many new user-friendly features to assist schools and parents in the education of children enrolled in SSSH. Such resources include:

- the current school calendar
- a presentation on how to create a sensory quilt
- a career opportunities link to view all open SSSH vacancies
- under the eligibility button: Supplementary Aids and Services and Modifications and Accommodations
- beginning in September, the new draft form of the SSSH Curriculum and Resource Book
- beginning in October, a virtual art gallery of the student art displayed in Central Office

We hope the information is helpful to you. Check back periodically. We are adding new information and resources as they become available. The site can be viewed at dese.mo.gov/divspeced/stateschools/. ♦

Technology “Q & A”

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In this section, we will answer your questions about technology. We want to know any questions you may have about operating computers and peripherals, software, assistive devices, etc. Send your questions by e-mail or mail to Stephanie Brooks in Central Office, or give the questions to your assistant area director.

Database Changes for 2004-2005 School Year

by Jo Smith, Central Office

IEP Program

1. The grade level is no longer required on the IEP worksheet.
2. The requirements have changed for these sections:
 - Extent of Participation in Regular Education
 - Education Services
 - Placement
 - Modification*Please read these sections carefully on the worksheet and in the IEP manual.*
3. The date of committee meeting is no longer needed on the worksheet under Compensatory Time.
4. In the Notice of Action section, there is a new field called Other where reasons for the Notice of Action can be entered if not listed.

STLS

1. There is now a way to track FMLA more effectively in STLS.
2. The annual leave and sick leave balances are on the time input screen, which makes leave tracking more efficient.

ATIS

1. The lunch program Daily Lunch/Attendance Form has been added.
2. A tracking system for nonattendance has been added with the added feature of being able to fill out the nonattendance form within the program and e-mail it to the area office and Central Office.
3. Related Services bubble sheets can be printed for Psychological Services, Vision Consultant, O&M, Behavior Consultant, Music Therapy and Psychiatric Counseling.
4. There is an additional attendance code called In-School Student Not Scheduled for Services for those in-school students who (by their IEP) do not attend every day. ♦

A Grand Expedition!

by Dana Flournoy, Principal, Maple Valley

The italicized items indicate skills taught.

MAPLE VALLEY STUDENTS WENT ON A GRAND adventure with Lewis and Clark this past spring. During the morning, students interacted with objects used by Lewis and Clark as they traveled the country. Students participated in a “supply” relay race where they *identified* items including old tin teakettles, cheesecloth, a compass, socks, tin cups, spoons and hats. These items were from the actual supply list on the Lewis and Clark Expedition. This game was a great opportunity for students to practice *identifying common household items* such as cups, spoons, socks and hats as well as unfamiliar objects such as tin teakettles and a compass. Each student *reached for* and *grasped* as many items as they could. Some items were moved to the edge of the table so students could get to them better. Each student *put* all of the objects in a bag and *carried* it to the other side of the room.

Students practiced their *eye-hand coordination* during “Hunting for Food” while shooting foam discs at geese and duck decoys and an antelope target. This required students to *visually attend* to a still object. Some students *used both hands at midline* to steady the disc thrower and pull the trigger at the same time. Students with sensory impairments that impede their ability to control the amount of force used to touch or grasp items were able to manipulate and explore these hunting decoys without accidentally causing damage to the “birds.”

When they needed a break, students sat around the campsite or in a tent listening to the insects buzzing about. Insect and animal sounds were recorded onto a step-by-step communication device activated by a Big Mac. Each student got to *press a switch* to listen to the sounds of the forest. A mock fire with a cooking spit set above it showed students how Lewis and Clark cooked food. A rubber chicken and pig were tied to the wood above the fire. The “fire” effect was made by a small fan* blowing air upward to move lightweight yellow and orange cloth.

The slimiest part of the expedition was exploring “musketor swamp,” which was full of flies. Plastic flies were added to large quantities of green and yellow gelatin in a small wading pool. Students *took off their shoes and socks* and *walked* through the cool, slimy swamp. This was good practice for students learning to *take steps* and to *step over* stationary objects. Students who could not or would

not walk in the swamp rolled up their sleeves and went digging with their hands. This activity was quite slippery and required adult hands-on assistance for safety!

During the afternoon, each student had the opportunity to go on a “Sensory Safari” of North American animals**. Students touched teeth, claws and fur pelts from a variety of animals, including bear, antelope, deer, beaver and coyote. Because special care was needed with these actual animal hides and skulls, students practiced *waiting* in line for their turn to explore. Along with the tactile experience, the students would *press a switch* to hear each animal’s call.



Prior to this hands-on experience, students listened to a short description of these animals that emphasized how the Lewis and Clark Expedition observed and used these animal resources. It was a historical and fun day of learning for each student. ♦

(Resources listed on page 8)

*Imitation cauldron or torch purchased at Spencer's Gifts (\$20)

**Safari In A Box. Safari Club International Foundation Sables. Contact Susan Hagen at HAG300@aol.com.

This is an excellent example of how learning can be fun. The staff at Maple Valley were able to combine the essential skills of many students into a fun learning experience. For future issues of *Staff Highlights*, we are looking for similar articles. The activity does not have to be an all-day or all-school activity, just the combination of learning and fun.

THE BIG BEARS

Book Review by Janelle Burch, Supervisor for Instruction

By Melvin Berger
Newbridge Educational Publishing
333 East 38th Street, New York, NY 10016
<http://www.newbridgeonline.com>
Book: \$24.95

THE STUDENTS AT NEW DAWN STATE SCHOOL enjoyed a lesson and activities presented by Candy Birdsong, the Primary I classroom teacher. She was assisted by the students in her classroom as she read the oversized book *The Big Bears* as part of a thematic unit on The Zoo.

The lesson was highly interactive. Ms. Birdsong led the group through the story as her students demonstrated the appropriate actions to go along with the story. This demonstration served as a cue for the other students to participate.

Different stuffed bears were used to depict the differences in polar bears, grizzly bears, black bears and giant pandas.

In the book, the bears used their claws, cuddled, fed their cubs, ate, nibbled, slept, played, caught fish and looked for a den.

The Primary 1 students demonstrated all of the actions on cue and practiced the skills of responding to a visual stimulus, reaching, maintaining sitting balance, performing balance activities, rolling, sitting and walking.

All of the students were attentive, active and involved in this 30-minute lesson. The pace moved slowly enough to give everyone a chance to experience the movement activities and to look at the pictures in the "BIG" book as the teacher read the story. Learning was fun through this movement-based, interactive lesson.

Shared Reading with Oversized Books

The Newbridge Web site offers these ideas on shared reading.

Shared reading is a collaborative learning activity that helps students enjoy learning to read. It offers an opportunity to directly teach reading and writing skills in a supportive environment.

Easy to implement in the classroom:

- Talk about the topic and the cover photo; ask questions to solicit students' oral participation.
- Read the Big Book aloud with the students once for pleasure.
- Reread it several times for different purposes in class sessions of 20 to 30 minutes.
- Dip into the book for specific information, rather than reading it in sequence each time.

For effective shared reading sessions:

- Move slowly through the book as you read together and model fluency.
- Stop to examine the photos closely.
- Read and reread sentences to work toward fluency.
- Invite students to make predictions and ask questions.
- Explore the special features of nonfiction, such as:
 - table of contents
 - glossary
 - index
 - labels
 - charts
 - captions
 - maps
 - illustrations

Shared reading models the ways good readers successfully read informational text, and it teaches effective reading strategies and behaviors.

(Printed with permission from Newbridge Educational Publishing)

School Bus Poster Contest

This year six SSSH schools participated in the annual Missouri Association of Pupil Transportation poster contest: Trails West, Cedar Ridge, Special Acres, Citadel, Mississippi Valley and Gateway/Hubert Wheeler. These schools submitted a total of 23 posters.

The first-place winner in the special education category was a **student** from Cedar Ridge State School. Second- and third-place winners were **students** from Gateway/Hubert Wheeler and Trails West. Congratulations to all the students who created a poster for this contest.

Looking to the future, this is an annual contest, and the rules and

theme are publicized by Central Office in late spring. Many of our students are capable of making a poster if given the opportunity. Here are some ideas and facts to consider:

■ Few other schools in Missouri enter posters in the special education category, so State School students have a higher chance of being selected as one of the winners.

■ The judges understand that writing the words in the theme can be challenging for our students and accept some degree of assistance on this required part of the poster.

■ Nita Thornburgh, teacher-in-charge at Cedar Ridge, mentioned that



The winning poster – “Flashing Red Means Stop Ahead.”

they had assisted the student in developing her poster by taking several digital pictures of the school buses. The student selected the image she preferred and used this picture for reference in drawing and coloring a detailed bus. ♦

Curriculum Changes

(continued from page 1)

are necessary for the student to be successful in postsecondary life. From the knowledge standards, many of the IEP goals will be developed or used to develop educational priorities.

In the “what all students should be able to do” area are the process (performance) skills. These skills occur across all content areas and grade spans. Again, we had already adapted these skills to meet the needs of SSSH based on the process standards of the Show-Me Standards. Because these goals are very broad and global, they will rarely be used as IEP goals but may be used to provide ideas for development of other essential skills.

Learning activities is the next component of the curriculum and provides an example of an activity on how to teach an essential skill. Included are specific lessons from the three-volume TEACH manuals and ideas for computer-assisted technology and assisted technology.

The final curriculum component is the assessment section, which will indicate how SSSH will evaluate the progress and success of the students.

During the next school year, the staff will participate in at least three professional development activities presented by their building administrators on developing an understanding of the curriculum and how to use it in IEP development. Each building administrator will also designate one REACH classroom, which will be a model classroom for implementing the curriculum and educational strategies.

In the 2005-2006 school year, the SSSH curriculum will be implemented by everyone. In an effort to continue to refine our new curriculum, twice during the coming school year we will be asking for your comments and recommendations on the curriculum.

This curriculum has been developed for all SSSH students throughout Missouri to provide a resource for the development of IEPs and a focus for student outcomes. ♦

(continued from page 6)

Lewis and Clark Resource List

(Compiled by Susan Hagen, Speech Therapist, Maple Valley)

Missouri Department of Conservation. For a variety of Lewis & Clark books, games, etc.

- Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Guide to Recreation & Visitor Safety
- Lewis & Clark Bingo \$13.95 (www.lucybingogames.com)

Marsh, Carole. “Lewis & Clark Go On A Hike!” Gallopade International \$5.95 (www.gallopade.com)

Patzman, Barbara J. “Would You Have Gone with Lewis and Clark?” United Printing and Mailing, Inc. 117 West Front, P.O. Box 936, Bismarck, ND 58502 (www.nationalgeographic.com/lewisandclark/resources.html) ♦

Oral Hygiene Recommendations for the Student With Special Needs

by Claudia Rampley, Central Office

- Make sure you have good light and can see what you are doing.
- Use a space that is least confining for you and the student.
- If the student wants to brush his or her own teeth but has a problem grasping the toothbrush, build up the handle with tape. There are also special-shaped brushes available. (Your nurse, OT, ST or local dental office can assist you in finding appropriate brushes.)
- Demonstrate. Have the student watch and copy your movements. Use praise.
- If you are assisting or providing oral hygiene, it is important to stand or sit behind the student. You may be able to guide the student's hand to place the toothbrush for the correct position and movement. Have the student hold a mirror or watch in the mirror. Repeat the movement until the student can do it well. Divide the mouth into different parts, and focus on each part. A timer will help as will practice, patience and encouragement.
- Students with special needs can be very sensitive around their mouths. It is common for them to tense their upper or lower jaws, which makes it difficult to clean their teeth. Tartar and calculus can easily accumulate around the lower teeth if they are not cleaned well. Position yourself behind the student's head, and place the palm of your hand along the cheek, your thumb in between the lip and teeth, and your index finger under the chin. This allows you to control the student's head while keeping the lip clear from the teeth. ♦

Educator Certification Changes

by Stephanie Brooks, Central Office

In August 2003, educator certification revised the classifications for teaching certificates. The PC I, PC II and CPC certificates were replaced with:

- IPC (Initial Professional Certificate), which will be issued to new teachers and last for four years.
- CCPC (Career Continuous Professional Certificate), which will be issued to those teachers meeting CCPC requirements. This will last for 99 years. There are no ongoing professional development requirements for those teachers holding a master's degree. Those without a master's degree must take 15 hours per year of high-quality professional development.

There is a posting on the official bulletin board at each school that outlines the specific requirements for upgrading existing certificates at their expiration date. Refer to this posting for details of the procedures.

Note the following:

- Educators holding PC I, PC II or CPC certificates are not required to change to the IPC or CCPC classifications until the expiration date on their current certificates.
- Educators with a PC II who do not hold a master's degree are now exempt from the former requirement of taking 12 credit hours of coursework every seven years to renew the certificate. If you were in the process of taking coursework to satisfy this requirement, you do not need to take any further coursework.
- Educators holding a PC I will

not be able to upgrade to a CCPC until they have four years of full-time, regular teaching experience. Substitute teaching or being a teacher's aide does not count toward the four years. Any educator whose PC I expires prior to completion of the four years of teaching will complete the upgrade form mentioned below and request an extension. The PC I will be extended until the educator has four years of experience and can apply for the CCPC.

The necessary upgrade form can be obtained from your building administrator or Central Office or can be downloaded from the DESE Web site: www.dese.mo.gov/divteachqual/teachcert/ (Go to Applications and Forms, then Frequently Requested Forms). The educator completes the front of the form and sends it to Central Office. Central Office completes the back of the upgrade form and submits it to educator certification. ♦

Words of Wisdom From the New Dawn Class of 2004

When interviewed for their student profiles in preparation for the graduation ceremony last year, the class of 2004 at New Dawn agreed on the following advice for the students and staff who would be returning to school next year.

- Treat people like you want to be treated.
- Remember that what you say is important, but the way you say it is what really counts.
- Everyone makes mistakes, so keep trying.
- It's OK to ask for help.
- When you make a mistake, learn from it. ♦

HUMAN RESOURCES

DESE Ambassadors Awards Program

by Becky Kempker, Central Office

For the past year, SSSH employees have been allowed to receive the service awards that are given by the DESE Ambassadors. We are excited to participate in the program, but there have been a few questions about it.

We hold a ceremony in the month following each quarter to mark the five-year employment anniversaries that fell within the quarter. Eligible employees receive a certificate and the gift that is designated for that anniversary year. The gifts are:

- 5 years – frame for certificate
- 10 years – ink pen with seal
- 15 years – coaster
- 20 years – personalized marble paperweight
- 25 years – personalized diamond-shaped desk plaque
- 30 years – personalized blue cracked ice desk plaque
- 35 years – personalized brass/wood hanging plaque
- 40 years – personalized Missouri-shaped hanging plaque

Administrative leave for years of service is also given as follows:

- 20 and 25 years of service – 4 hours (half day)
- 30 and all 5-year increments over 30 – 8 hours (full day)

The leave should be used within one year of presentation to the employee or it will be lost. This leave cannot be donated nor will the employee be paid for it if he or she leaves the department for any reason or fails to use the leave within one year of its presentation.

This leave must be used at one time, rather than in increments. (Example: If an employee receives four hours for 25 years of service, the employee must use all four hours at one time, not one hour on one day and three hours on a different day).

DESE Ambassadors will not

retroactively give gifts or leave to anyone who reached a five-year anniversary date prior to the date when SSSH was allowed to participate in this program. ♦

Maximum Annual Leave

Per Personnel Policy 200-210, employees cannot have an annual leave balance of more than two years worth of accrual on October 31 of each year. Excess annual leave is allowed to accumulate and carry over from pay period to pay period until October 31.

Employees need to look at their annual leave balance and project what will be accrued between now and October. If, after that projection, you will be over your maximum annual leave allowed, it is time to start planning to take some time off. Please discuss this with your supervisor before requesting annual leave. It is the responsibility of employees to monitor their annual leave balances.

When a staff member ends state employment, either by retirement or resignation, only the amount of annual leave accrued up to the maximum allowed will be paid. Any annual leave accrued over the maximum at the time of separation will be lost or can be donated to Shared Leave. ♦

Employees Required to File and Pay State Taxes

The Governor signed into law HB 600 in July 2003. This bill makes, among other things, filing and paying your state taxes a condition of employment with the state of Missouri. To comply with this new law, each year after mid-October, the Department of Revenue will run the W-2 file of the state employees against a Revenue database of delinquent taxpayers to determine the state employees who have not filed or paid state taxes.

The Department of Revenue will then send a letter to each state employee affected. If the employee does not respond or resolve the issue within a reasonable timeframe, the Department of Revenue will notify the agency involved. The agency will have to notify the employee that their employment will be terminated if they do not pay their state tax owed.

If you need to contact Department of Revenue about a pending tax liability, the phone number is (573)751-7200. ♦

Direct Deposit

For anyone receiving paper checks, consider direct deposit. Pay will be available in your bank account on the date pay is distributed, and delays caused by mailing of paper checks will be avoided. If a check is lost, it can take up to three weeks to get a replacement check.

Direct deposit forms are available from your building administrator. ♦

Questions & Answers

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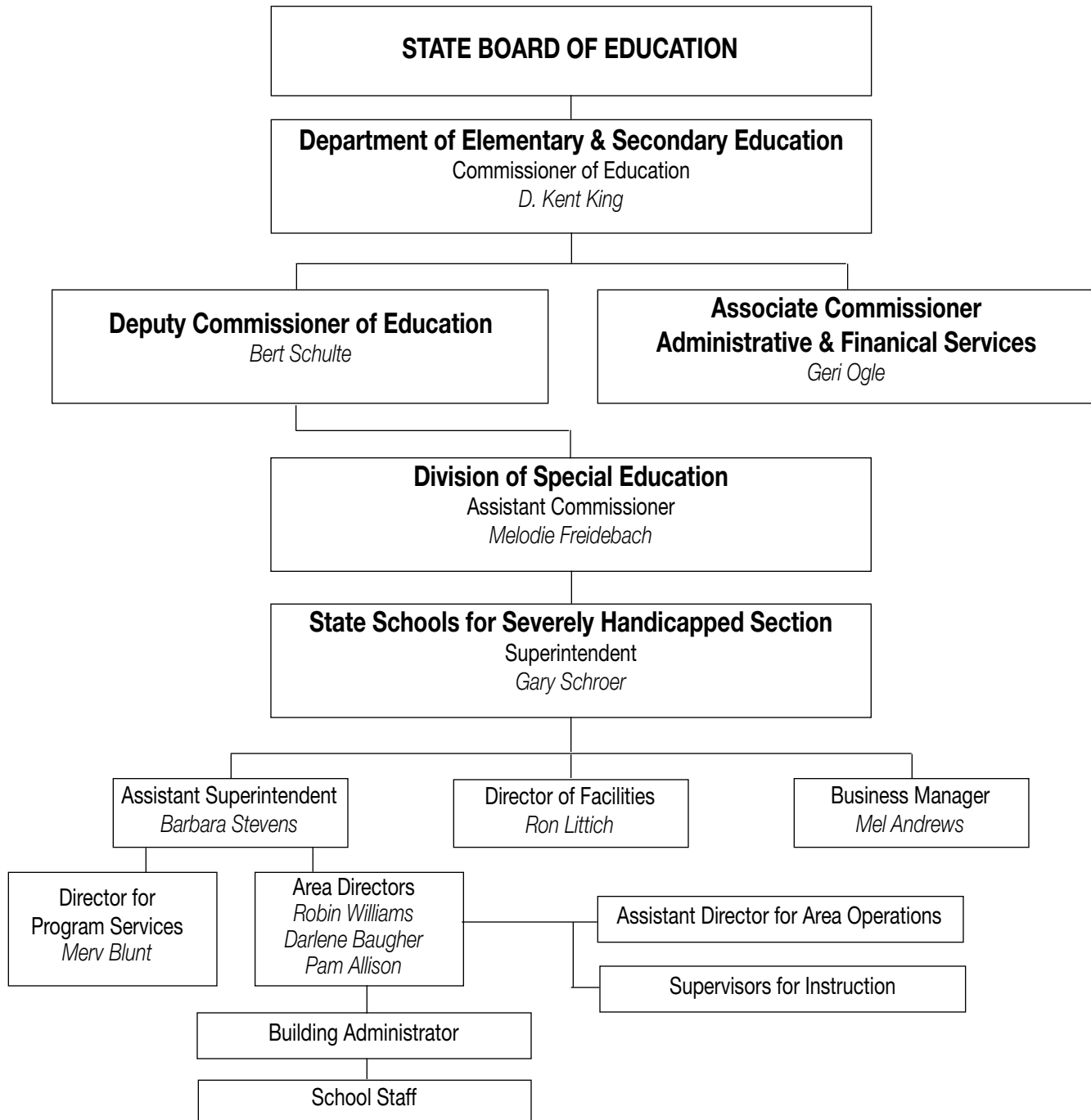
Have questions about any of the topics covered in this newsletter?

Need to know more about instruction, equipment, health issues for students, human resources or any other topic that pertains to your job?

We will answer them in this section. Forward questions to Stephanie Brooks in Central Office.

Who's Who at DESE?

The chart listed below shows how, as an employee, you are associated with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Within DESE there are several Divisions. State Schools is under the Division of Special Education. Under the Division of Special Education are sections, which include the three State Board Operated Programs, Missouri School for the Deaf (MSD), and Missouri School for the Blind (MSB) and State Schools for Severely Handicapped (SSSH). You are classified as a DESE employee working for Special Education under State Schools.





STATE SCHOOLS FOR SEVERELY HANDICAPPED
Missouri Department of Elementary
and Secondary Education

• • •

Web site: dese.mo.gov/divspeced/stateschools/

NOTE: If you have items of interest for the *Staff Highlights*, please call 573-751-0706 (Missouri Relay 800-735-2966) or forward them to: Stephanie Brooks, State Schools for Severely Handicapped, P.O. Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480.
E-mail: Stephanie.Brooks@dese.mo.gov